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MEMORANDUM

October 6, 1978

TO: ARA - Ambassador Vaky
FROM: *Irving G. Tragen*
SUBJECT: IAHRC Visit to Argentina

Over the past week, I have had several conversations with the Argentine Ambassador to the OAS, Julio Carasales, and with his deputy, Arnaldo Listre, on the status of an IAHRC visit to Argentina. These conversations reflect the improved relations between the US and the Argentine Delegations since the Mondale/Videla talks. The Argentines have taken the initiative on several occasions to offer their assistance in helping us on issues, including the formulation of the consensus document at the recent MFM.

The following is a composite of their views:

1. Agreement in principle for a visit in March or April 1979 has been reached. The conversations in New York with IAHRC Chairman Aguilar were very fruitful. Listre, who reported that he had participated in some of them, praised Aguilar for his handling of the Argentine envoys and credited Aguilar with clearing up GOA reservations and in working out the framework for and details of a visit. While both warned of possible last minute snags, they are optimistic about the prospects for a visit.
2. The March-April 1979 date is being worked out for mutual convenience. The IAHRC workload as a result of the Nicaraguan crisis is very heavy through Christmas. On the other hand, Videla is still consolidating power and needs time to effect reforms. Since January and February are the vacation months in Buenos Aires, neither party reportedly believes that an effective visit can be made until March or April. The Argentines emphasized Videla's disposition to improve the environment for human rights in Argentina. They look forward to substantial Cabinet changes in November, following up on recent military reassignments -- including

the elimination of the "hard-core anti-IAHRC Naval clique" now running the Foreign Ministry. Listre speculated that Raul Quijano might well be back in the Foreign Ministry by Christmas.

3. The Argentine Mission to the OAS reports directly to the Casa Rosada, not through the Foreign Ministry, on all IAHRC matters. The Mission, they reported, is under instructions not to discuss IAHRC matters with the Embassy to the White House since the Ambassador shares the Foreign Minister's adamant anti-IAHRC stand.

4. Their major concern is a flare-up of the Beagle Channel dispute which might divert Videla's attention and require new alignments within the military which could preclude accommodation with IAHRC.

cc: ARA/ECA - Mr. Ruser
ARA/PPC - Mr. Einaudi

/mab

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